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Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
New York, 16-20 June 2014

Note verbale dated 30 June 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat

The Permanent Mission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management of the United Nations Secretariat and, with reference to the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, has the honour to attach the statement made at the closing session of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States by the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil (see annex).

It is hereby requested that the statement be considered a document of the Meeting, with a corresponding symbol, to be included in the note by the Secretariat on the documentation of the Fifth Biennial Meeting (A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/INF/2).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 30 June 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations addressed to the Secretariat

Statement by the Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, Mootaz Ahmadein Khalil, at the closing session of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

20 June 2014

1. I would like at the outset to thank you for your efforts in steering the Biennial Meeting of States. I would also like to associate with the statement of the Arab Group delivered by the delegation of the State of Qatar and of the African Group delivered by the delegation of Nigeria.

2. We were all keen on reaching a balanced text which takes into account the interests of all States and stays faithful to the mandate of our Meeting and to the scope of the Programme of Action.

3. With regard to the outcome document for this Biennial Meeting of States, I would like to emphasize the following points, which Egypt has raised throughout the negotiation process:

(a) Egypt once again reaffirms its full commitment to combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We express our willingness to make all efforts to implement the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument to achieve this goal;

(b) Political commitments of Member States stem from the text of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. Additional issues and concepts are only elements for discussion and examination. Any further decisions in other appropriate forums in this regard should be taken only by consensus;

(c) The implementation of the recommendations contained in the final documents of review conferences or biennial meetings of States takes place in the context of preserving the right of States to legitimate self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter, and the right of States to manufacture and possess small arms and light weapons, with emphasis on the national sovereignty of Member States, particularly with regard to the exclusive jurisdiction over national border control and national security;

(d) The legal obligations of Member States stem from treaties or other international contractual agreements to which they are party. In this context, we reiterate that any references to any international agreement do not create any obligation on the part of States that are not party to it.

4. The general guidelines of our position, and reservations, with regard to the outcome of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States are as follows:

(a) First and foremost, the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States has a clear mandate to review the implementation of the Programme of Action at the global, regional and national levels. There are many references in the draft outcome that

extend beyond the scope of the Programme of Action and insert substantive input originating from other processes and organs, including from the Security Council. We stress once again the need to respect the scope of the Programme of Action and to avoid interference in mandates and processes;

(b) All measures which are identified in this outcome will be reviewed in the context of national legislations and policies and alignment with national priorities, with due regard to the differential capacities of States and their level of development;

(c) The implementation of the Programme of Action shall be conducted in a holistic manner, and addressing stockpile management, including physical security measures, shall not reorder any of the priorities agreed upon;

(d) International guidelines, benchmarks, indicators and policies should be collectively agreed within the appropriate universal United Nations body;

(e) Implementation of this outcome should not increase the burden on developing countries by setting targets which are not commensurate with their capacities or prescribing measures imported from other processes.

5. Egypt would like to register in section IV of the draft report of this Meeting (A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/L.3) that the discussions that we have conducted at this Meeting reveal the continuing lack of consensus on the following two issues:

- Ammunition for small arms and light weapons and explosives
- Integrated border control management

6. We would also like this statement to be duly reflected in the final report and considered as a document of the Meeting.

7. We would like to thank you, your team and the Secretariat for your continuous efforts in this regard, and would like to reiterate the commitment of Egypt to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Thank you for your attention.